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**Andrea Bocelli Foundation Hosts  
Assistive Technology and Social Impact Workshops at MIT**  
*Andrea Bocelli will attend the event on vision research and poverty programs  
funded by a collaboration between his foundation and MIT researchers*

The [Andrea Bocelli Foundation](#) (ABF) and the [Massachusetts Institute of Technology](#) (MIT) will host international leaders in the fields of scientific, technological and social impact research at a workshop on Friday, December 6 from 8 AM to 5 PM at MIT in Cambridge, Massachusetts. **Andrea Bocelli**, Italian Ambassador to the United States **Claudio Bisogniero**, MIT President **L. Rafael Reif**, ABF President **Laura Biancalani** and others will participate in the 1-day event, which is intended to open a dialogue and share the results of this international and interdisciplinary collaboration.

"A partnership that fully reflects the objectives of 2013-Year of Italian Culture in the United States, according to Ambassador of Italy to the USA Claudio Bisogniero. "Innovation, research and discovery are, in fact, the motives inspiring the Year which, with over 300 events, is contributing to further strengthening the already excellent relations between Italy and the United States."

Following ABF's 2012 inaugural workshop in Pisa, this year's meeting will be divided into two parallel events entitled **Challenges** and **Break the Barriers**. Both workshops will feature research devoted to the intervention programs of the Andrea Bocelli Foundation that is currently being conducted at the Institute and is organized jointly with MIT's [Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Lab](#) (CSAIL) and [Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab](#) (J-PAL).

"We are very proud of this project," said Biancalani, "especially that its cultural, innovative and development significance has been acknowledged by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs so as to be included in the official program of the celebration of the Year of Italian Culture in America."

"We are so pleased that the Andrea Bocelli Foundation has selected MIT as the site for the 2013 workshop," said Jeffrey Newton, Vice President of Resource Development at MIT. "We share a commitment with the Foundation to explore the use of technology to help individuals overcome various challenges, especially those who are blind or visually impaired, and we are also deeply involved in addressing the barriers to overcoming poverty throughout the world. We salute the Andrea Bocelli Foundation for its commitment to these two important issues."

The Challenges workshop, presented in collaboration with CSAIL, will feature a debate between Italian and MIT researchers on the ways neuroscientists and computer scientists are attempting to develop innovative technologies for the visually impaired. The multidisciplinary MIT Fifth Sense project, founded by ABF and developed at CSAIL, will also present their research on providing several key functions of vision to blind and visually impaired people.

[www.abfmit2013.com](http://www.abfmit2013.com)



In Break the Barriers, hosted in collaboration with J-PAL, young leaders involved with the ABF initiative in Haiti will share their experiences working in that country, while J-PAL researchers discuss the mutual importance of both supporting social programs in the field and utilizing scientific methods to assess the impact of those programs.

For information and registration visit [www.abfmit2013.com](http://www.abfmit2013.com)

For additional event information please contact:

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For more information on 2013, Year of Italian Culture in the US:

Web: <http://www.italyinus2013.org/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ItalyInUs2013>

Twitter: [#2013italianyear](https://twitter.com/#2013italianyear)